A Week of Prayers for Lenten Devotions

Every family and household is encouraged to take a renewed look at the penitential practice of prayer this Lenten Season. Below is a suggested format for each day of the week for the six weeks of Lent. If families gathered together once each day for the intentions and prayer for that day, we will have begun to deepen our understanding of our baptismal promises, and will be more prepared to "renew" these promises at an Easter liturgy.

A parishioner living alone can also enter into this prayer. Those bringing Holy Communion to the homebound might consider calling one of the homebound each day and praying over the phone with them. There are many other creative ways to build a "habit of prayer" throughout Lent that can continue "forever and ever Amen!"

Other suggestions:

- Attend at least one daily Mass for each week of Lent.
- Find out when and where Adoration of the Holy Eucharist is offered or stop by a church. Spend time in prayer before Our Lord in the Tabernacle.
- Begin the practice of offering thanks before every meal.
- Help a refugee family get settled. Pray for peace in war-torn regions.
- Work together in a soup kitchen and converse with persons served.
- Write a letter of faith and encouragement to some who is incarcerated.
- Visit an elderly or sick person. Take care of an errand for them.
- Be an advocate. Write to an elected official and/or donate to a cause that provides resources to meet the needs of poor and low-income people in your community or in a troubled part of the world.
- Once a week eat meals that total no more than the daily cost allotted by government food assistance programs for your size family. (See USDA Modified Thrifty Food Plan). Refer to the USCCB First Fridays for Food Security Facebook event at http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/first-fridays-for-food-security.cfm.
- Endorse the Faith Advocates for Jobs Campaign and download the resource for church groups, Unemployment and the Economic Crisis Toolkit at http://faithadvocatesforjobs.wordpress.com/

Sunday Intention:
For the Church

Leader: Heavenly Father, Your Risen Son claims the Church as his beloved spouse and pours love over all the baptized. Hear our prayers for the church throughout the world. Let this Lenten Season draw us closer to his Sacred Heart in deeper commitment to the mission of proclaiming and living the Kingdom of God.

All: We pray for Our Holy Father, our bishop, our pastor, all ordained and for all in leadership positions in the Catholic Church. May their attempts to promote human dignity and the common good bear fruit in our Lenten prayer and penance. For all the elect journeying to baptism and for the baptized ready to welcome them into the sacramental life of the Church. May our deepened commitment to our baptismal promises bring the light of Christ to the darkness of injustice and cruelty in out world. We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever, Amen.

Sunday Prayer: The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom com,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass
against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

Monday Intention:
For Peace in Our World

Leader: Heavenly Father, we proclaim your son as the Prince of Peace. At his Last Supper, he gave his disciples his gift of peace. Today we mourn for the many wars, conflicts, brutalities, and countless deaths of innocents in our world. Hear us plead for peace in our time, and let us be instruments of your peace and love in a world of violence and hatred.

All: We pray for all nations torn by war and for all victims of war. May all nations "beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. May all nations not raise the sword against each other or train for war again." (Isaiah 2:5). We express gratitude for all who serve or have served in our nation's military. For their safe return home, and for proper care for all veterans still suffering from the effects of war. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever, Amen.

Monday Prayer: Peace Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace;
Where there is hatred, let me sow charity;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is error, the truth;
Where there is doubt, the faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light; and
Where there is sadness, joy.
O, Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love;
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying to ourselves that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Tuesday Intention:
For Refugees, Immigrants, and all Homeless

Leader: Heavenly Father, Your Son was born in an animal stall because there was no room for Mary and Joseph at the Inn. A restless homelessness journeying from village to village preaching and healing marked his public ministry. He identified with those uprooted, abandoned, and rejected and proclaimed, “In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places.” (John 14: 2) Hear us now imitate your Son as we pray for those wandering the lands throughout our world seeking a home; and seek to be their advocates for justice.

All: We pray for the more than 220 million people wandering the face of our earth searching for safety, stability, work and basic human needs. We pray in sorrow for the hostility they often endure and for the exploitation and violence that crushes their souls. We pray that their search for welcome and peace be fulfilled with compassion of the nations and the support of all believers in God. We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever, Amen.

Tuesday Prayer: Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd;
there is nothing I lack.
In green pastures he makes me lie down;
to still waters he leads me;
he restores my soul.
He guides me along right paths
for the sake of his name.
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff comfort me.

II

You set a table before me
in front of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Indeed, goodness and mercy will pursue me
all the days of my life;
I will dwell in the house of the LORD
for endless days.

Wednesday Intention:
For all hungry and Malnourished

Leader: Heavenly Father, With a few loaves and fish, your Son fed the multitudes with abundance. In the Eucharist, he continues to nourish our souls with the Bread of Life: his very Body and Blood. Hear our prayer for those suffering hunger throughout our world.

All: We pray for the growing numbers of American families now living in poverty and choosing between housing and meals; heating or eating; medicine or nutrition. We pray for all efforts to secure stable sources of food for all families and households. We pray for all farmers, and farm workers. May they receive just recompense for their labors and harvests. For all operating soup kitchens and food pantries. We pray for millions of third world families despairing of the next meal and watching their loved ones die of starvation. We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever, Amen.

Wednesday Prayer: The Beatitudes (Matt. 5:3-12)

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the land.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart,
for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you [falsely] because of me.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven. Thus they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Thursday Intention:
For All Lacking Adequate Health Care

Leader: Heavenly Father, in his public ministry, your Son healed the sick and cured many of diseases. Throughout the centuries, manifestations of his Blessed Mother and official canonization of saints are often accompanied with healings of those declared incurable by medical professionals. Hear us as we pray for deeper compassion and justice for the sick and their loved ones anxious for their care.

All: We pray for the tens of millions in our own nation lacking basic health care insurance. We pray for those who receive inadequate treatment for their illnesses and injuries or have suffered financially from their health condition. We pray for all Catholic health care professionals who realize their career is a vocation flowing from their faith. May the conscience of all health care professionals and all faith based health care institutions be protected from participating in any medical procedure that violates the sacredness of human life. We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever, Amen.

Thursday Prayer: The Chaplet of Divine Mercy

1. Begin with the Sign of the Cross, 1 Our Father, 1 Hail Mary and The Apostles Creed.

2. Then on the Our Father Beads say the following:
Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.

3. On the 10 Hail Mary Beads say the following:
For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

(Repeat step 2 and 3 for all five decades).

4. Conclude with *(three times)*:
Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

Friday Intention:

For the Protection of Human Life from Conception to Natural Death

Leader: Heavenly Father: The Blessed Mother rejoiced at Archangel Gabriel's announcement she would give birth to your divine Son. When she visited Elizabeth her relative, the baby in Elizabeth's womb "leaped for joy" (Luke 1: 44). Hear our prayers for the protection and safety for all preborn children and care and compassion for their mothers.

All: We pray for all preborn children safe in their mothers' wombs and we pray for their safe delivery and welcome into nurturing families. We pray for women with troubled or unwanted pregnancies. May they receive the financial, medical, spiritual and emotional support to bring their babies to birth. We pray for all women who have had abortions and for all involved in procuring abortions. May they come to realize the sacredness of all human life especially life in the womb. May they realize the power of Our Lord's healing and merciful love. We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever, Amen.

Friday Prayer: At Least One Decade of the Rosary

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art though among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy
womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.

Saturday Intention:
For Justice for all Workers and Employers

Leader: Heavenly Father, your Son labored as a carpenter using his skills to build and repair homes, make tools for other workers, and create other useful products for daily life in Nazareth. Hear us pray for a greater sense of the dignity of work and a deeper sense of the sacred in the workplace.

All: We pray for the growing numbers of workers now unemployed for long periods of time. We pray for businesses and companies ready to hire when demand for their services and products improves. We pray for all efforts to secure justice on the workplace for employees and employers. We pray for millions of people exploited for their cheap labor and often reduced to slave conditions. We pray that labor unions be recognized as legitimate advocates for workplace justice, in keeping with the constant teaching of the Church's Magisterium. We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever, Amen.

Saturday Prayer: Magnificat of the Blessed Mother (Lk 1:46-55)

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;
my spirit rejoices in God my savior.
For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness;
behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed.
The Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
His mercy is from age to age
to those who fear him.
He has shown might with his arm,
dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart.
He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones
but lifted up the lowly.
The hungry he has filled with good things;
the rich he has sent away empty
He has helped Israel his servant,
remembering his mercy,
according to his promise to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."